

**Educational Materials**  
**Vaccine Handling Standards and Best Practices**  
Last Revised: 02/29/2000

**New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Immunization Program**  
**Vaccine Handling Standards and Best Practices**

**Minimum Standards**

*The provider shall...*

1. Designate a Vaccine Manager among their office staff to monitor vaccine and keep up-to-date on State vaccine policies.
2. Maintain temperature at the range specified by the manufacturer's package insert. (Refrigerator: 2-8 Celsius [35-46, Fahrenheit]; Freezer: -16 Celsius or below [5 Fahrenheit or below])
3. Have a "high-low" thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer units that indicates the highest and lowest reading over a twenty-four hour period.
4. Monitor and record the temperature of the refrigerator and freezer units at the beginning and end of every work day.
5. Retain a copy of the temperature chart for at least one month.
6. Rotate vaccine in the refrigeration units with the earliest expiration dates towards the front.
7. Review inventory at a minimum of every 90 days to look for short-dated and/or expired vaccine.
8. Contact the Immunization Program at least two months before vaccine will expire to arrange for its use when the provider does not feel they will be able to use the vaccine before expiration.
9. Contact the Immunization Program in the event of any potential storage problems (i.e., power loss, refrigerator malfunction, etc.) to determine the viability of the vaccine.
10. Store no foods or drinks in the refrigeration units to avoid contamination and excessive opening and closing of the doors and subsequent raising of temperatures.
11. Store vaccine only on the shelves and never in the door

**Best Practices**

*The provider shall...*

1. Observe all minimum standards as outlined above.
2. Designate a back-up Vaccine Manager who is also familiar with monitoring vaccine storage practices.
3. Use an alarm system unit that can note temperature variances when there is no one in the office.
4. Keep the temperature recording charts for a period of one year. This allows the provider to monitor for seasonal problems with the refrigeration units.
5. Review inventory at a minimum of every 30 days to look for short-dated and/or expired vaccine.
6. Store diluent in the door or outside the refrigerator.
7. Stack the vaccine so that air can circulate around the boxes.
8. Place water bottles around the inside walls of the refrigerator unit and ice packs around the inside walls of the freezer to help maintain cool temperatures in the event of a power loss.
9. Purchase a power plug protector to keep the refrigerator from becoming unplugged.
10. Label the circuit breaker with a bright sticker to keep maintenance crews from accidentally cutting off power.
11. Develop a Back-up Storage Plan in the event of a breakdown of the refrigeration units.